United Nations

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean

14 July 1999

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-fourth Session
Supplement No. 29 (A/54/29)

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United Nations • New York, 1999

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ISSN 0255-1594

[19 July 1999]

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. By its resolution 52/44 of 9 December 1997, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean[1] and requested the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee to continue his dialogue on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee with all of its members, the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean and to report at an early date to the General Assembly, through the Ad Hoc Committee, on his consultations and on other relevant developments.

2. Pursuant to resolution 52/44, the Ad Hoc Committee held its session on 14 July 1999 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Committee held one formal meeting and the Chairman also held a number of consultations and meetings during 1999.

3. The following delegations made statements in the general exchange of views under agenda item 5: Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and United Republic of Tanzania.

4. The Ad Hoc Committee is composed of the following States:

(a) Members (44)

Australia	Mozambique
Bangladesh	Netherlands
Bulgaria	Norway
Canada	Oman
China	Pakistan
Djibouti	Panama
Egypt	Poland
Ethiopia	Romania
Germany	Russian Federation
Greece	Seychelles
India	Singapore
Indonesia	Somalia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Sri Lanka
Iraq	Sudan
Italy	Thailand
Japan	Uganda
Kenya	United Arab Emirates
Liberia	United Republic of Tanzania
Madagascar	Yemen
Malaysia	Yugoslavia[2]
Maldives	Zambia
Mauritius	Zimbabwe

(b) Observers: Nepal, South Africa and Sweden.

5. At its 447th meeting, on 14 July 1999, the Ad Hoc Committee elected the following officers:

Chairman:	Mr. John de Saram (Sri Lanka)
Vice Chairmen:	Ms. Bronte Moules (Australia) Mr. Carlos dos Santos (Mozambique) Mr. Hazairin Pohan (Indonesia)
Rapporteur:	Mrs. Radafiarisoa Léa Raholinirina (Madagascar)

Chapter II
Work of the Ad Hoc Committee in 1999

A. Agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee

6. At its 447th meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the following agenda (A/AC.159/L.128):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of the Chairman.
3. Election of other Officers.
4. Adoption of the agenda.
5. Report of the Chairman of the Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 52/44 of 9 December 1997.
6. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.
7. Other matters.

B. Election of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee

7. At the same meeting, the Committee elected Ambassador John de Saram of Sri Lanka as the Chairman by acclamation.

C. Election of Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur

8. The Committee also elected, by acclamation, Ms. Bronte Moules of Australia and Mr. Hazairin Pohan of Indonesia as Vice-Chairmen, and Mrs. Radafiarisoa Léa Raholinirina of Madagascar as the Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc

Committee. It was decided that Ambassador Carlos dos Santos (Mozambique) would continue to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

9. The Committee also reaffirmed its decision to continue to maintain summary records of its proceedings.

D. Report of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 52/44

10. At its 447th meeting, on 14 July 1999, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee reported on his consultations:

> "We all are aware, of course, that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, established by the General Assembly, last reported to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session in 1997. The Report of the Ad Hoc Committee in 1997 appears in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 29* (A/52/29).
>
> "The agenda item under which the report of the Ad Hoc Committee was submitted was entitled 'Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace'.
>
> "The Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace[3] was adopted by the General Assembly many years ago — in 1971.
>
> "The Ad Hoc Committee in its 1997 report recorded that it had not found it possible to reach a consensus on the manner of the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.
>
> "The General Assembly at its fifty-second session, in 1997, in its resolution 52/44 of 9 December 1997, took note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Assembly also, in paragraph 2 of resolution 52/44, expressed its conviction that participation of all the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee is important and would greatly facilitate the development of a mutually beneficial dialogue to advance peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.
>
> "The General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of resolution 52/44, requested the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee to continue his dialogue on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee with all of its members, the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean.
>
> "The General Assembly requested the Chairman to report, through the Ad Hoc Committee, to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session in 1999, this year.
>
> "I have, pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 52/44, had consultations with members of the Ad Hoc Committee, with the permanent members of the Security Council and with major maritime users of the Indian Ocean. While I have not been able to reach all the members of the Ad Hoc Committee, I believe I have been able to reach a large number.
>
> "The conclusions that have formed in my mind, as a consequence of the consultations I have had, are, I would say, the following:
>
> > "There appears to me to be a general sense among those members of the Ad Hoc Committee whom I have been able to consult that, while the objectives of the 1971 Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace are ideal, and of significance, there are nevertheless a number of complexities and difficulties in the way of implementation of the Declaration.
> >
> > "The objectives of the 1971 Declaration should nevertheless not be lost sight of, however complex and difficult the manner of implementation of the Declaration may be.
> >
> > "It was for that reason that the General Assembly had at its fifty-second session in its resolution 52/44 expressed the view that greater efforts and more time were required to develop a focused discussion on practical measures to ensure conditions of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.
> >
> > "As to the three permanent members of the Security Council that do not participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee — namely France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America — the conclusion I reached after consulting them was that: their earlier-stated views as to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on implementation of the 1971 General Assembly Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace had not changed. Their positions, therefore, on non-participation in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee remained unchanged; and

they were, accordingly, unable to participate in the Ad Hoc Committee."

11. In the course of the meeting, an exchange of views took place on, *inter alia*, the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

12. The Ad Hoc Committee reaffirmed the conclusions it had reached during its 1994, 1995 and 1996 sessions and emphasized the need to foster consensual, step-by-step approaches, particularly given the propitious international climate, which was conducive to the pursuit of such endeavours. The Committee reaffirmed the commitment to the realization of the goals of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.

13. The Ad Hoc Committee remained convinced that the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users in the work of the Committee was important and would assist the progress of a mutually beneficial dialogue aimed at developing conditions of peace, security and stability in the region.

E. Recommendations

14. The Chairman was requested to continue informal consultations with the members of the Ad Hoc Committee and to report through the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

F. Introduction and adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session

15. At its 447th meeting, on 14 July 1999, the Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee introduced the draft report of the Committee (A/AC.159/L.129).

16. In that connection, the Chairman informed the members of the Committee of his intention to hold informal consultations concerning the text of the resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

17. At the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted its draft report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session (A/AC.159/L.129).

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 29* (A/52/29).

[2] General Assembly resolution 47/1 applies.

[3] Resolution 2832 (XXVI).

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